

Employment Insurance, March 2023

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Thursday, May 18, 2023

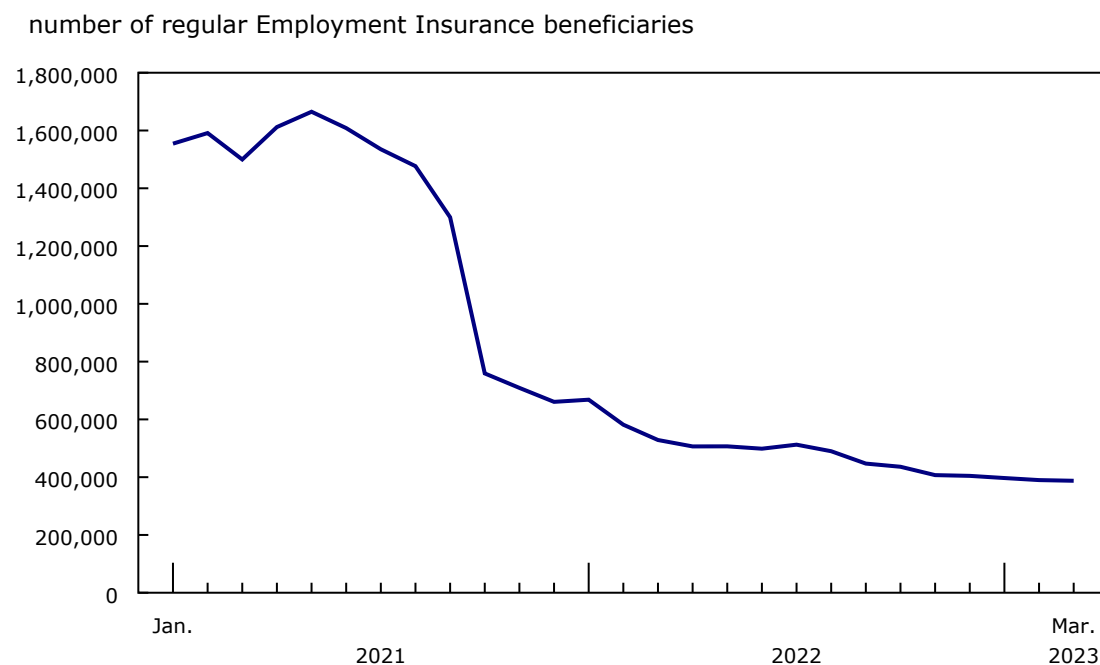
In March, 388,000 Canadians received regular Employment Insurance (EI) benefits, little changed from February. The number of regular EI recipients in March 2023 was the lowest on record (outside of the period when the Canadian Emergency Response Benefit was in place from March to September 2020). The number of people collecting regular EI benefits fell by 26.7% (-141,000) in the 12 months to March 2023.

According to the Labour Force Survey, the unemployment rate held steady at a near-record low of 5.0% in March. Meanwhile, the proportion of the unemployed who had been out of work for 27 weeks or more—the long-term unemployed—fell from 20.3% in March 2022 to 16.0% in March 2023.

In general, variations in the number of beneficiaries can reflect changes in the circumstances of different groups, including those becoming beneficiaries, those going back to work, those exhausting their regular benefits, and those no longer receiving benefits for other reasons.

Chart 1

The number of regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries little changed in March



Source(s): Employment Insurance Statistics (2604), table 14-10-0011-01.

Fewer people collect regular Employment Insurance benefits in five provinces

In March, the number of people receiving regular EI benefits fell in five provinces. The largest proportional decline was in Prince Edward Island (-5.5%; -400), where the number of regular EI recipients fell for a third consecutive month. Other notable proportional decreases occurred in Alberta (-2.8%; -1,100), Manitoba (-2.2%; -300), Nova Scotia (-2.2%; -500) and New Brunswick (-1.1%; -300).

The number of regular EI beneficiaries in Ontario edged up 1.0% (+1,100) in March. This was the third consecutive monthly increase for the province, bringing cumulative gains since December 2022 to 6,900 (+6.5%). Compared with 12 months earlier, the number of regular EI beneficiaries in Ontario was down by 22.9% (-33,600) in March 2023.



There was little change in the number of regular EI beneficiaries in the other four provinces in March.

Among census metropolitan areas (CMAs), the largest proportional decreases in regular EI beneficiaries were in the CMAs of Hamilton (-10.2%; -600) and Kelowna (-7.5%; -200). Conversely, the largest proportional increases in the number of beneficiaries were in the CMAs of Guelph (+16.7%; +200) and Kingston (+13.6%; +200).

More women collect regular Employment Insurance benefits in March 2023, partially offsetting a decrease among men

The number of women receiving regular EI benefits increased by 5,900 (+4.0%) in March, partially offsetting a decrease among men (-8,300; -3.4%). This was the first increase in the number of women collecting regular EI benefits since July 2022.

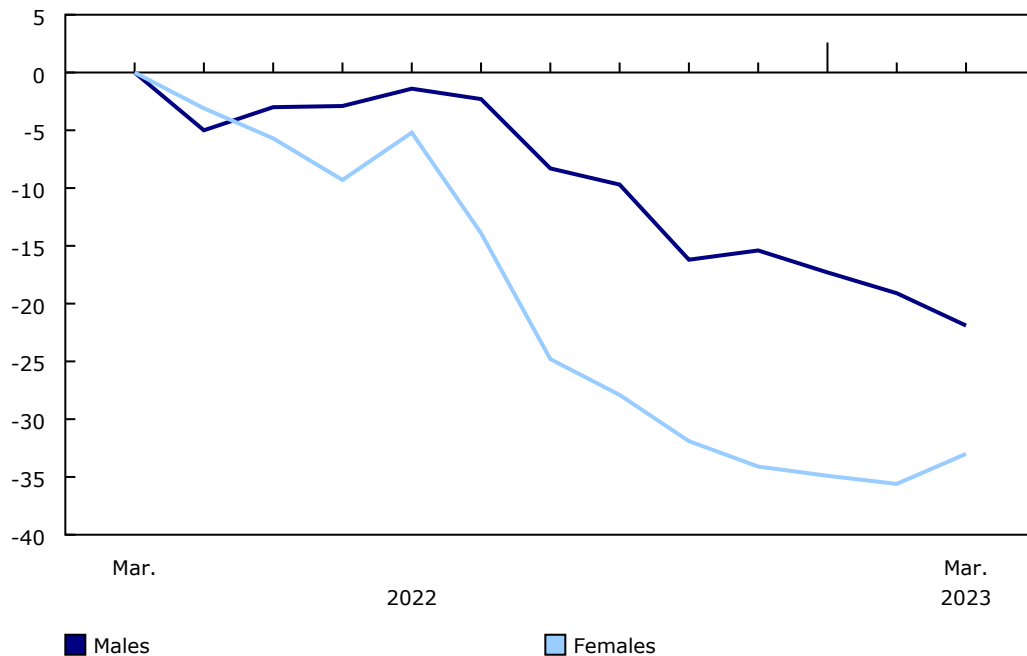
The increase in regular EI beneficiaries among women in March 2023 was split evenly between core-aged women aged 25 to 54 (+3.4%; +3,200) and women aged 55 years and older (+7.4%; +3,100). Despite the increase in March, on a year-over-year basis, the number of regular EI beneficiaries was lower for both core-aged women (-28.3%; -38,000) and women aged 55 years and older (-31.7%; -21,000).

For a third consecutive month, fewer core-aged men (aged 25 to 54) received regular EI benefits (-2.4%; -3,600) in March. Among men aged 55 years and older, the number of regular EI recipients fell by 4.8% (-3,500).

In March, the number of young people aged 15 to 24 years receiving regular EI benefits fell by 5.2% (-1,300) for men and by 3.6% (-400) for women.

Chart 2
Number of regular Employment Insurance beneficiaries down for both men and women since March 2022

change (%) since March 2022



Source(s): Employment Insurance Statistics (2604), table 14-10-0011-01.

Sustainable Development Goals

On January 1, 2016, the world officially began implementing the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)—the United Nations' transformative plan of action that addresses urgent global challenges over the following 15 years. The plan is based on 17 specific sustainable development goals.

Employment Insurance statistics are an example of how Statistics Canada supports reporting on global sustainable development goals. This release will be used to help measure the following goal:



Note to readers

Availability of data by occupation

Statistics Canada is currently revising the Employment Insurance Statistics (EIS) data to conform to the 2021 National Occupational Classification (NOC) standard. This will result in EIS occupation categories aligning with the 2021 Census of Population and Labour Force Survey NOC 2021 categories. The release of revised data is planned for later this year. Until then, information on Employment Insurance (EI) beneficiaries by occupation, including tables 14-10-0336-01 and 14-10-0337-01, will not be available.

Concepts and methodology

EI statistics are produced from administrative data sources provided by Service Canada and Employment and Social Development Canada. These statistics may, from time to time, be affected by changes to the Employment Insurance Act or administrative procedures.

EI statistics indicate the number of people who received EI benefits and should not be confused with Labour Force Survey (LFS) data, which provide estimates of the total number of unemployed people. There is always a certain proportion of unemployed people who do not qualify for benefits. Some unemployed people have not contributed to the program because they have not worked in the past 12 months or their employment was not insured. Other unemployed people have contributed to the program, but do not meet the eligibility criteria, such as workers who left their jobs voluntarily or those who did not accumulate enough hours of work to receive benefits.

All data in this release are seasonally adjusted, unless otherwise specified. To model the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, values for all series from March 2020 to November 2021 have been treated with a combination of level shifts and outliers to determine a seasonal pattern for seasonal adjustment. For more information on seasonal adjustment, see [Seasonally adjusted data – Frequently asked questions](#).

The number of regular EI beneficiaries for the current month and the previous month is subject to revision.

The **number of beneficiaries** is all people who received regular EI benefits from March 12 to 18, 2023. This period coincides with the reference week of the LFS.

A **census metropolitan area (CMA)** and a **census agglomeration (CA)** are formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a population centre. A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000. A CA must have a population of at least 10,000. See [Standard Geographical Classification 2016 – Definitions](#) for more information.

Next release

Data on EI for April will be released on June 22.

Table 1
Beneficiaries receiving regular income benefits,¹ by province and territory, sex and age group –
Seasonally adjusted

	March 2022	February 2023 ^P	March 2023 ^P	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023
	number		change		% change		
Canada							
Both sexes	528,620	389,890	387,540	-2,350	-141,080	-0.6	-26.7
15 to 24 years	65,850	35,340	33,690	-1,650	-32,160	-4.7	-48.8
25 to 54 years	310,470	240,930	240,540	-390	-69,930	-0.2	-22.5
55 years and over	152,300	113,630	113,310	-320	-38,990	-0.3	-25.6
Men	300,670	243,150	234,890	-8,260	-65,780	-3.4	-21.9
15 to 24 years	38,940	24,150	22,900	-1,250	-16,040	-5.2	-41.2
25 to 54 years	175,650	147,490	143,940	-3,550	-31,710	-2.4	-18.1
55 years and over	86,080	71,500	68,050	-3,450	-18,030	-4.8	-20.9
Women	227,940	146,740	152,650	5,910	-75,290	4.0	-33.0
15 to 24 years	26,910	11,190	10,790	-400	-16,120	-3.6	-59.9
25 to 54 years	134,820	93,430	96,610	3,180	-38,210	3.4	-28.3
55 years and over	66,220	42,130	45,260	3,130	-20,960	7.4	-31.7
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Both sexes	37,390	29,660	29,380	-280	-8,010	-0.9	-21.4
15 to 24 years	4,010	2,640	2,500	-140	-1,510	-5.3	-37.7
25 to 54 years	18,540	14,510	14,480	-30	-4,060	-0.2	-21.9
55 years and over	14,840	12,510	12,400	-110	-2,440	-0.9	-16.4
Men	21,250	17,560	17,040	-520	-4,210	-3.0	-19.8
Women	16,140	12,100	12,340	240	-3,800	2.0	-23.5
Prince Edward Island							
Both sexes	9,170	6,740	6,370	-370	-2,800	-5.5	-30.5
15 to 24 years	2,000	1,120	940	-180	-1,060	-16.1	-53.0
25 to 54 years	4,220	3,290	3,160	-130	-1,060	-4.0	-25.1
55 years and over	2,940	2,330	2,280	-50	-660	-2.1	-22.4
Men	5,180	4,160	4,020	-140	-1,160	-3.4	-22.4
Women	3,990	2,590	2,360	-230	-1,630	-8.9	-40.9
Nova Scotia							
Both sexes	30,080	22,620	22,130	-490	-7,950	-2.2	-26.4
15 to 24 years	3,880	2,260	2,090	-170	-1,790	-7.5	-46.1
25 to 54 years	16,800	13,060	12,890	-170	-3,910	-1.3	-23.3
55 years and over	9,400	7,300	7,140	-160	-2,260	-2.2	-24.0
Men	17,650	14,620	14,260	-360	-3,390	-2.5	-19.2
Women	12,430	7,990	7,870	-120	-4,560	-1.5	-36.7
New Brunswick							
Both sexes	37,050	25,400	25,110	-290	-11,940	-1.1	-32.2
15 to 24 years	8,570	2,120	2,260	140	-6,310	6.6	-73.6
25 to 54 years	17,160	13,600	13,410	-190	-3,750	-1.4	-21.9
55 years and over	11,320	9,670	9,440	-230	-1,880	-2.4	-16.6
Men	20,920	16,740	16,150	-590	-4,770	-3.5	-22.8
Women	16,130	8,660	8,970	310	-7,160	3.6	-44.4
Quebec							
Both sexes	121,030	84,910	84,360	-550	-36,670	-0.6	-30.3
15 to 24 years	11,860	5,440	5,700	260	-6,160	4.8	-51.9
25 to 54 years	69,670	49,710	51,160	1,450	-18,510	2.9	-26.6
55 years and over	39,490	29,760	27,500	-2,260	-11,990	-7.6	-30.4
Men	72,690	54,910	54,550	-360	-18,140	-0.7	-25.0
Women	48,340	30,000	29,810	-190	-18,530	-0.6	-38.3
Ontario							
Both sexes	146,610	111,920	112,990	1,070	-33,620	1.0	-22.9
15 to 24 years	17,610	10,560	9,970	-590	-7,640	-5.6	-43.4
25 to 54 years	90,620	75,370	74,280	-1,090	-16,340	-1.4	-18.0
55 years and over	38,370	25,990	28,740	2,750	-9,630	10.6	-25.1
Men	79,090	66,730	63,010	-3,720	-16,080	-5.6	-20.3
Women	67,510	45,190	49,980	4,790	-17,530	10.6	-26.0

Table 1 - continued

Beneficiaries receiving regular income benefits,¹ by province and territory, sex and age group – Seasonally adjusted

	March 2022	February 2023 ^P	March 2023 ^P	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023
Manitoba							
Both sexes	18,640	13,630	13,330	-300	-5,310	-2.2	-28.5
15 to 24 years	3,010	1,900	1,720	-180	-1,290	-9.5	-42.9
25 to 54 years	11,700	8,890	8,810	-80	-2,890	-0.9	-24.7
55 years and over	3,930	2,850	2,800	-50	-1,130	-1.8	-28.8
Men	11,250	8,750	8,460	-290	-2,790	-3.3	-24.8
Women	7,390	4,880	4,860	-20	-2,530	-0.4	-34.2
Saskatchewan							
Both sexes	16,690	12,390	12,340	-50	-4,350	-0.4	-26.1
15 to 24 years	2,450	1,540	1,480	-60	-970	-3.9	-39.6
25 to 54 years	10,200	7,640	7,660	20	-2,540	0.3	-24.9
55 years and over	4,040	3,200	3,200	0	-840	0.0	-20.8
Men	10,160	8,200	7,900	-300	-2,260	-3.7	-22.2
Women	6,530	4,190	4,450	260	-2,080	6.2	-31.9
Alberta							
Both sexes	58,700	40,220	39,110	-1,110	-19,590	-2.8	-33.4
15 to 24 years	7,140	4,140	3,780	-360	-3,360	-8.7	-47.1
25 to 54 years	38,250	26,910	26,580	-330	-11,670	-1.2	-30.5
55 years and over	13,300	9,170	8,750	-420	-4,550	-4.6	-34.2
Men	33,830	25,900	24,970	-930	-8,860	-3.6	-26.2
Women	24,860	14,320	14,140	-180	-10,720	-1.3	-43.1
British Columbia							
Both sexes	50,830	39,870	39,830	-40	-11,000	-0.1	-21.6
15 to 24 years	5,000	3,390	3,030	-360	-1,970	-10.6	-39.4
25 to 54 years	31,640	26,160	26,240	80	-5,400	0.3	-17.1
55 years and over	14,180	10,320	10,560	240	-3,620	2.3	-25.5
Men	27,210	23,950	22,920	-1,030	-4,290	-4.3	-15.8
Women	23,610	15,920	16,910	990	-6,700	6.2	-28.4
Yukon							
Both sexes	700	460	470	10	-230	2.2	-32.9
15 to 24 years	70	10	20	10	-50	100.0	-71.4
25 to 54 years	440	300	310	10	-130	3.3	-29.5
55 years and over	190	150	140	-10	-50	-6.7	-26.3
Men	430	280	300	20	-130	7.1	-30.2
Women	270	180	180	0	-90	0.0	-33.3
Northwest Territories							
Both sexes	750	420	390	-30	-360	-7.1	-48.0
15 to 24 years	90	40	20	-20	-70	-50.0	-77.8
25 to 54 years	510	290	280	-10	-230	-3.4	-45.1
55 years and over	150	90	90	0	-60	0.0	-40.0
Men	440	270	250	-20	-190	-7.4	-43.2
Women	310	150	140	-10	-170	-6.7	-54.8
Nunavut							
Both sexes	660	400	390	-10	-270	-2.5	-40.9
15 to 24 years	90	40	40	0	-50	0.0	-55.6
25 to 54 years	490	300	300	0	-190	0.0	-38.8
55 years and over	80	60	60	0	-20	0.0	-25.0
Men	380	270	250	-20	-130	-7.4	-34.2
Women	270	140	140	0	-130	0.0	-48.1

^P preliminary

1. Includes people who receive regular income benefits, whether or not they participate in one of three employment benefit programs, namely the Skills Development Program, the Job Creation Partnerships Program and the Self-employment Program.

Source(s): Table 14-10-0011-01.

Table 2
Initial and renewal claims received, by province and territory – Seasonally adjusted

	March 2022	February 2023 ^P	March 2023 ^P	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023
	number			change		% change	
Canada	237,190	246,310	250,180	3,870	12,990	1.6	5.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	8,400	8,550	8,360	-190	-40	-2.2	-0.5
Prince Edward Island	2,560	2,730	2,690	-40	130	-1.5	5.1
Nova Scotia	9,300	9,530	9,720	190	420	2.0	4.5
New Brunswick	10,330	10,140	10,190	50	-140	0.5	-1.4
Quebec	61,380	64,210	65,930	1,720	4,550	2.7	7.4
Ontario	78,180	82,100	82,760	660	4,580	0.8	5.9
Manitoba	8,820	8,780	9,090	310	270	3.5	3.1
Saskatchewan	6,610	6,700	6,870	170	260	2.5	3.9
Alberta	22,770	24,320	24,340	20	1,570	0.1	6.9
British Columbia	27,930	28,310	29,260	950	1,330	3.4	4.8
Yukon	310	310	310	0	0	0.0	0.0
Northwest Territories	320	300	270	-30	-50	-10.0	-15.6
Nunavut	200	190	210	20	10	10.5	5.0

^P preliminary

Source(s): Table [14-10-0005-01](#).

Table 3
Beneficiaries receiving regular income benefits,¹ by census metropolitan category² – Seasonally adjusted

	March 2022	February 2023 ^P	March 2023 ^P	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023
	number		change		% change		
Newfoundland and Labrador							
Census metropolitan areas	5,840	3,320	3,320	0	-2,520	0.0	-43.2
St. John's	5,840	3,320	3,320	0	-2,520	0.0	-43.2
Census agglomerations	4,890	4,000	3,990	-10	-900	-0.3	-18.4
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	26,660	22,340	22,080	-260	-4,580	-1.2	-17.2
Prince Edward Island							
Census agglomerations	4,530	2,700	2,600	-100	-1,930	-3.7	-42.6
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	4,640	4,050	3,770	-280	-870	-6.9	-18.8
Nova Scotia							
Census metropolitan areas	6,670	4,000	3,980	-20	-2,690	-0.5	-40.3
Halifax	6,670	4,000	3,980	-20	-2,690	-0.5	-40.3
Census agglomerations	9,300	7,390	7,080	-310	-2,220	-4.2	-23.9
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	14,110	11,220	11,060	-160	-3,050	-1.4	-21.6
New Brunswick							
Census metropolitan areas	7,770	4,170	4,220	50	-3,550	1.2	-45.7
Moncton	4,200	2,200	2,190	-10	-2,010	-0.5	-47.9
Saint John	3,560	1,970	2,020	50	-1,540	2.5	-43.3
Census agglomerations	8,390	4,820	4,810	-10	-3,580	-0.2	-42.7
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	20,900	16,410	16,090	-320	-4,810	-2.0	-23.0
Quebec							
Census metropolitan areas	65,790	43,750	43,220	-530	-22,570	-1.2	-34.3
Montréal	46,660	30,340	30,510	170	-16,150	0.6	-34.6
Ottawa–Gatineau (Quebec part)	3,450	2,410	2,320	-90	-1,130	-3.7	-32.8
Québec	7,800	5,310	4,930	-380	-2,870	-7.2	-36.8
Saguenay	2,970	2,200	2,140	-60	-830	-2.7	-27.9
Sherbrooke	2,550	1,940	1,810	-130	-740	-6.7	-29.0
Trois-Rivières	2,350	1,550	1,510	-40	-840	-2.6	-35.7
Census agglomerations	15,040	10,590	10,270	-320	-4,770	-3.0	-31.7
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	40,200	30,570	30,870	300	-9,330	1.0	-23.2
Ontario							
Census metropolitan areas	113,500	85,220	85,920	700	-27,580	0.8	-24.3
Barrie	2,480	1,940	2,030	90	-450	4.6	-18.1
Belleville	1,460	1,030	1,060	30	-400	2.9	-27.4
Brantford	1,710	1,180	1,140	-40	-570	-3.4	-33.3
Greater Sudbury	2,540	1,560	1,590	30	-950	1.9	-37.4
Guelph	1,310	900	1,050	150	-260	16.7	-19.8
Hamilton	7,370	5,570	5,000	-570	-2,370	-10.2	-32.2
Kingston	2,000	1,180	1,340	160	-660	13.6	-33.0
Kitchener–Cambridge–Waterloo	5,270	4,230	4,360	130	-910	3.1	-17.3
London	5,530	4,430	4,810	380	-720	8.6	-13.0
Oshawa	4,420	3,180	3,160	-20	-1,260	-0.6	-28.5
Ottawa–Gatineau (Ontario part)	8,420	6,310	6,480	170	-1,940	2.7	-23.0
Peterborough	1,230	920	900	-20	-330	-2.2	-26.8
St. Catharines–Niagara	5,720	3,770	3,650	-120	-2,070	-3.2	-36.2
Thunder Bay	1,640	1,110	1,100	-10	-540	-0.9	-32.9
Toronto	56,990	40,790	40,690	-100	-16,300	-0.2	-28.6
Windsor	5,410	7,120	7,560	440	2,150	6.2	39.7
Census agglomerations	14,710	12,000	12,140	140	-2,570	1.2	-17.5
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	18,390	14,700	14,930	230	-3,460	1.6	-18.8
Manitoba							
Census metropolitan areas	9,510	6,480	6,270	-210	-3,240	-3.2	-34.1
Winnipeg	9,510	6,480	6,270	-210	-3,240	-3.2	-34.1
Census agglomerations	1,520	1,110	1,100	-10	-420	-0.9	-27.6
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	7,620	6,040	5,950	-90	-1,670	-1.5	-21.9

Table 3 - continued
Beneficiaries receiving regular income benefits,¹ by census metropolitan category² – Seasonally adjusted

	March 2022	February 2023 ^P	March 2023 ^P	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023	February to March 2023	March 2022 to March 2023
Saskatchewan							
Census metropolitan areas	5,880	4,150	4,100	-50	-1,780	-1.2	-30.3
Regina	2,190	1,600	1,570	-30	-620	-1.9	-28.3
Saskatoon	3,690	2,540	2,540	0	-1,150	0.0	-31.2
Census agglomerations	2,740	2,060	2,070	10	-670	0.5	-24.5
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	8,070	6,180	6,160	-20	-1,910	-0.3	-23.7
Alberta							
Census metropolitan areas	40,180	27,530	26,760	-770	-13,420	-2.8	-33.4
Calgary	18,180	12,480	12,160	-320	-6,020	-2.6	-33.1
Edmonton	20,850	14,170	13,740	-430	-7,110	-3.0	-34.1
Lethbridge	1,150	880	860	-20	-290	-2.3	-25.2
Census agglomerations	7,750	5,500	5,310	-190	-2,440	-3.5	-31.5
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	10,770	7,200	7,040	-160	-3,730	-2.2	-34.6
British Columbia							
Census metropolitan areas	30,150	23,600	24,120	520	-6,030	2.2	-20.0
Abbotsford–Mission	2,430	1,780	1,780	0	-650	0.0	-26.7
Kelowna	2,310	2,140	1,980	-160	-330	-7.5	-14.3
Vancouver	22,760	17,720	18,440	720	-4,320	4.1	-19.0
Victoria	2,660	1,970	1,920	-50	-740	-2.5	-27.8
Census agglomerations	11,390	8,960	8,570	-390	-2,820	-4.4	-24.8
Outside census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations	9,290	7,300	7,140	-160	-2,150	-2.2	-23.1

^P preliminary

1. Includes people who receive regular income benefits, whether or not they participate in one of three employment benefit programs, namely the Skills Development Program, the Job Creation Partnerships Program and the Self-employment Program.

2. 2016 Standard Geographical Classification.

Source(s): Table [14-10-0322-01](#).

Available tables: [14-10-0004-01](#) to [14-10-0011-01](#) , [14-10-0137-01](#), [14-10-0322-01](#), [14-10-0323-01](#), [14-10-0343-01](#), [14-10-0344-01](#) and [14-10-0346-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [2604](#).

More information about the concepts and use of Employment Insurance statistics is available in the *Guide to Employment Insurance Statistics* ([73-506-G](#)).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).